

Watershed Operations

October 2009

Water Supply, Upper Tygart Valley Watershed, West Virginia

Introduction

Construction began on the dam in 2006 and will be completed in 2009. As a condition of permitting under the Clean Water Act, mitigation activities must be completed before the dam can be utilized to supply water.



The Upper Tygart Valley Watershed Project located is in Randolph County, West Virginia.

Project Description

- **Location:** Randolph County, 2nd Congressional District
- **Federal Funding:** \$3,500,000
- **Sponsor Funding:** \$875,000

Mitigation activities include: creation of wetlands, angler access improvements (boat launch area, handicapped-accessible fishing area, and an angler walking trail), and a safety boom to prevent accidental boat escape over the dam. Additional work will be performed at other streams in the area, including the use of natural stream restoration to improve aquatic habitat for seven miles of trout stream: establishing vegetation, and creating fish habitat.

Partners

- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Randolph County Commission
- City of Elkins and the towns of Beverly, Huttonsville, and Mill Creek
- Tygarts Valley Conservation District
- West Virginia State Conservation Committee

Funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, this project is part of the Obama Administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jump-start the economy, and create jobs. NRCS is using Recovery Act dollars to update aging flood control structures, protect and maintain water supplies, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands. NRCS acquires easements and restores floodplains to safeguard lives and property in areas along streams and rivers that have experienced flooding.



View of the handicapped-accessible fishing and parking area on the downstream side of the dam. The pool below the dam is continuously fed with cool water from the reservoir.

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Benefits

The Upper Tygart Valley Watershed Project will improve health and human safety by providing needed water supply for communities in the Upper Tygart Valley River Watershed. In 1993, several towns in this watershed experienced a critical shortage of water. At the critical point, one water treatment plant was within 72 hours of complete depletion of water.

Economic Opportunities

It is estimated 27,803 residents directly or indirectly benefit from municipal water. Customers are the city of Elkins, and the towns of Beverly, Huttonsville, and Mill Creek (four municipalities and three public service districts). The majority of beneficiaries reside in Randolph County. Estimated average annual water supply benefits are \$1,414,193.

Statewide Perspective

Complementing this project, USDA Rural Development is planning to provide a loan and grant to Elkins for a Water Treatment Plant and Upgrade Project. Due to emergency circumstances, the City proposes to replace a significant portion of its antiquated water distribution system and construct a new six million gallon-per-day water treatment plant. USDA Rural Development is also funding a water treatment plant that will be built next to the reservoir that complements this project. Human health and safety will be improved by providing sufficient water to meet sanitary and fire protection needs. Randolph County is a recreation destination. The mitigation projects supplement recreational opportunities.

For More Information

USDA, NRCS
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Future location of the boat ramp and parking area.



The Elkwater Fork Dam's primary purpose is water supply.

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